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SUBJECT: UNODC HOSTS MEETING ON COUNTERNARCOTICS

¶1. (U) On September 25 in Tashkent, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Regional Office for Central Asia hosted a meeting for Drug Liaison Officers and Embassy staff with a counternarcotics role. The meeting addressed recent drug production and trafficking trends in Central Asia, UNODC's Outline Action Plan for Securing Central Asia's Borders with Afghanistan, and future activities.

¶2. (SBU) The Regional Coordinator circulated copies of an unofficial UNODC document outlining the action plan. The UNODC's Regional Coordinator stated that three areas in particular need more attention. First is further development of intelligence analysis and sharing. The plan envisions developing centers and offices that focus on improving the analytical capabilities of border control agencies as well as creating a "Competence Center" to monitor analytical work in target countries. Second, UNODC's strategy includes further expansion of Border Liaison Offices (BLOs)--which consist of law enforcement representatives who maintain contacts with counterparts across the border--to other borders between Central Asia and Afghanistan. Third, UNODC is interested in expanding interagency Mobile Interdiction Teams (MOBITs) to secure high-risk border areas. UNODC noted that these projects have previously been isolated, but they want "to mold them into a single, comprehensive strategy." UNODC is actively seeking project ideas from donors that support these goals.

¶3. (SBU) The action plan notes that the Central Asian Regional Information Coordination Center (CARICC) is an important component in UNODC's strategy, and participants stated that this should be inaugurated sometime in the first half of 2008. UNODC is looking to expand computer-based training for law enforcement officials in target countries, and a representative offered to brief Poloffs on this program in the future. Participants said that this probably would be the group's last meeting of the year for Drug Liaison Officers and Embassy staff following counternarcotics in Central Asia.
NORLAND